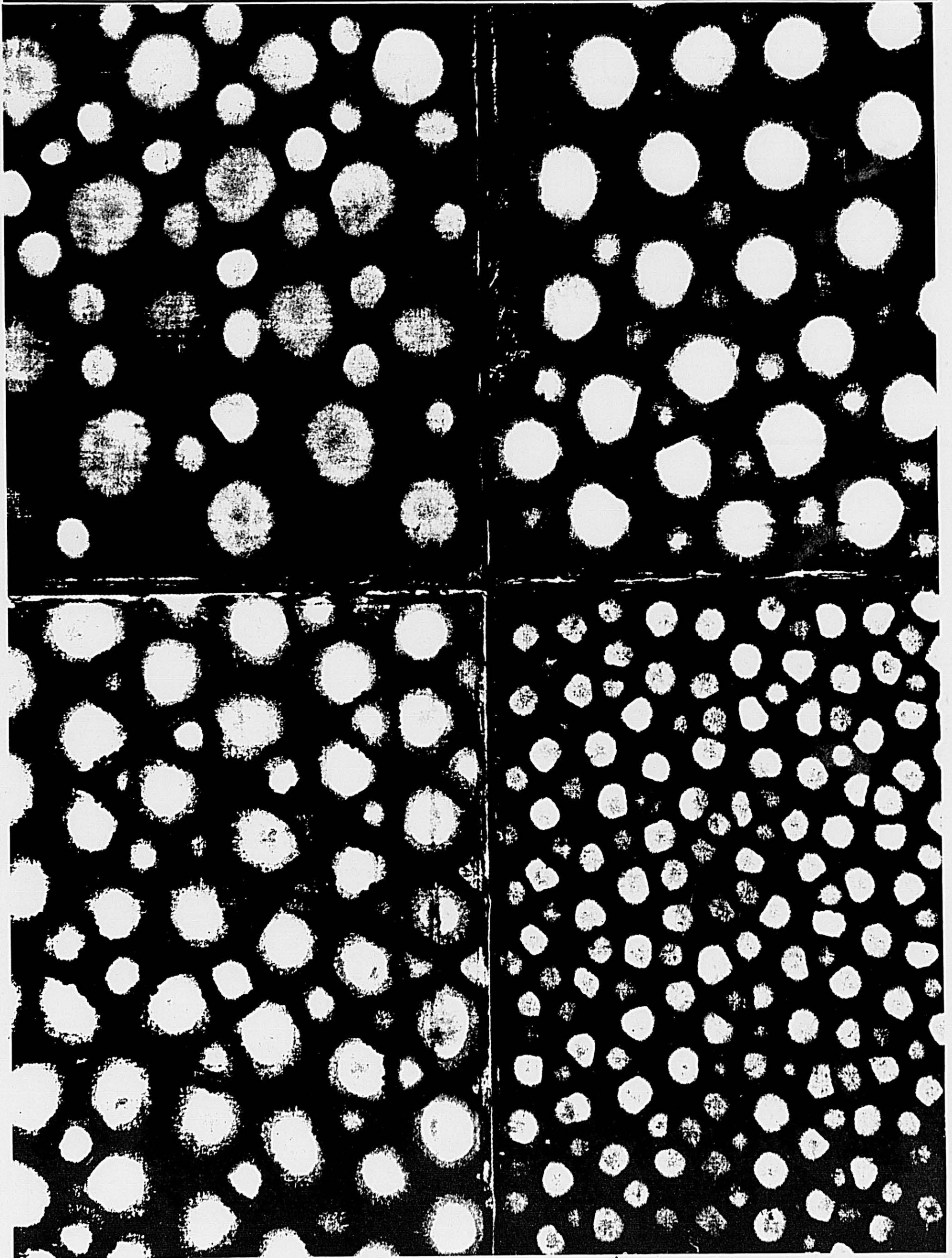


MCGILL DAILY *Culture*

Volume 82, Number 56

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Thursday, January 21, 1993



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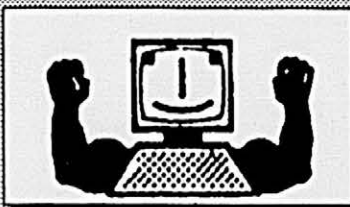
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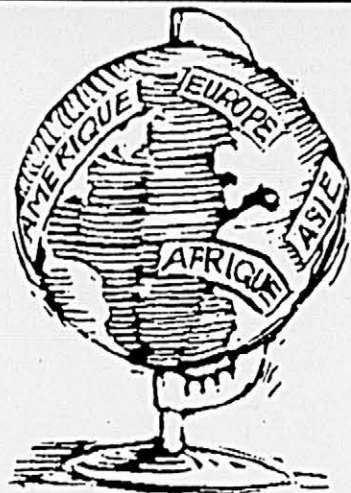
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Imperfect Playboy

THE CENTAUR THEATRE and the Black Theatre Workshop are currently presenting *Playboy of the West Indies* at the Centaur Theatre in Old Montreal. The original form of this play, *Playboy of the Western World*, written by J.M. Synge, was set in Ireland in the 1900s, but it has been adapted by Trinidadian playwright Mustapha Matura and reset in a sleepy fishing village in 1950s Trinidad.

No one who has an understanding of Caribbean culture and theatre can help but be disappointed by "Playboy." The play, which attempts to examine social issues of relevance in both the Caribbean and the world at large, narrowly escapes being an insult to Caribbean theatre through the work of some of its cast.

Despite its many flaws, "Playboy" manages to capture the atmosphere of rumshops everywhere in the West Indies. Some masterful performances are given which are worthy of note. Dawn Roach (*A Caribbean Midsummer Night's Dream*) is very convincing in the role of 'Peggy', and Jacklin Webb, winner of the 1989 award for Best Actress in the Quebec Drama Festival, brings the role of the eccentric Mama Benin to life on stage. In the men's corner, Oliver Samuels, possibly the best actor in the English-speaking West Indies today, is hilarious as Peggy's rum-loving father, and Marvin Ishmael turns 'Stanley', Peggy's yellow-bellied fiancé, into one of the most believable characters in 'Playboy.'

Unfortunately, these are the only bright spots that save 'Playboy of the West Indies' from complete failure. In its attempt to depict the difference between the romance of imagination and the harshness of reality, 'Playboy' is itself an example of a work which probably looks a lot better on paper than on stage.

To begin with, there is the plodding, pedantic opening of the play. It simply takes too long to get to the point. But once it gets there, trying to keep up with the storyline is like trying to catch a moving train. At times, the plot just passes by "like a full tram-car."

The speed with which romance develops between Peggy and Ken puts Romeo and Juliet's three-day love affair to shame, with a truly amazing twenty-four hours. This hurricane-force momentum sends the plot careening towards the ridiculous: by the morning after Ken's arrival, Stanley is offering him new clothes and a one way ticket to Venezuela, to get him out of Peggy's life. A new record in the Jealous Boyfriend category.

In spite of some genuinely funny scenes, none of the actors, with the exception of



Winston Sutton, Dawn Roach and Ken Pilgrim in *Playboy of the West Indies*

THEATRE

Playboy of the West Indies • Centaur Theatre

BY MELANIE NEWTON

Samuels, Webb and Roach, is able to avoid moments of not so much acting as mechanically throwing lines at the audience. As Ken, Winston Sutton's words and body movements are often out of sync, and this becomes painfully obvious when he breaks into long and rather melodramatic soliloquy à la Hamlet of which there are too many.

IF YOU HAVE LIVED in the Caribbean for any significant length of time you will have no trouble differentiating between the imitation accents and the Real McCoy in this play. I can overlook the fact that even though 'Playboy' is set in Trinidad, most of the actors are definitely NOT Trinidadian, but I can not ignore that some of them do not even sound Caribbean. I find it unfortunate that a few more good Caribbean actors could not have been found to lend an air of authenticity to this work.

Even if the actors had come straight out of the Trinidadian countryside, however, they could not have disguised the fact that *Playboy of the West Indies* is not a good example of Caribbean theatre.

The entire plot of the work is centred around the fact that Ken

is famous because he has killed his father. The fact that he is being hidden from the law by the people of Mayaro is mentioned but never developed.

In the reality of life in the Caribbean, this issue is just as relevant today as it was in the '50s. When compared to this largely ignored issue of the community's complete disinterest in the police, the theme of *Playboy of the West Indies* looks trivial. And compared with the enormous changes taking place in the West Indies, and the brilliant plays being written about them, 'Playboy' goes from looking insignificant to looking absolutely farcical.

Playboy of the West Indies manages to achieve at least one of its aims: it makes you laugh. Unfortunately, it never goes beyond this. It takes the enormous and diverse Caribbean region, so rich in culture and history, and reduces it to a few superficial stereotypes. 'Playboy' is - from sleepy beginning to melodramatic, soap opera end - mediocre at best and downright confusing at worst.

Playboy of the West Indies runs until January 31. Show times are Tuesday to Saturday 20h, and Saturday matinees at 14h. The Centaur Theatre is located at 453 St. Francis Xavier.

Black and White?

Five artists reclaim photographic history for women

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Historic Female • Galerie 3

BY ALISON MACALPINE

GALERIE 3, A TINY gallery buried in the heart of St. Henri, is currently mounting an exhibition of provocative photographic works by five Montreal artists.

The exhibition, entitled *The Historic Female: Re-Presenting Archival Photographs*, re-evaluates images of women captured by the camera in the last hundred years.

According to Marilyn Besner, Director of Galerie 3, "all five artists are concerned with the image of woman as found in historical archives and re-present these images in new work designed to encourage contemporary reflection." Combinations and distortions of photographs from the past emphasize that photos are politically motivated and are not simply objective records of reality.

The most overtly didactic work, Sorel Cohen's "Noli me Tangere," juxtaposes two photographic images. An ektachrome reproduction of a detail from Manet's *Olympia* dominates a smaller scale archival photo of the Paris stock exchange, symbolic of a male-dominated institution.

The ektachrome shows a female hand placed protectively across her genitals, the image underlined by the re-appropriated patriarchal Latin of the title: "Do not touch me."

A less explicit and therefore more thought-provoking work is Moira Egan's *Asylum Inmates*. Six photos of female psychiatric patients taken in the 1870's have been mounted behind six mirrors at eye level. As you pass in front of the display, your own image replaces the hazy women in the background, classified long ago as insane. The effect of being literally drawn into the work of art is gripping.

Other artists represented at Galerie 3 are Nina Levitt, Cheryl Simon and Cheryl Sourkes. Sourkes sums up one of the major themes of the exhibit: "properties that are believed to reside in things turn out to be those of the observer." Her observation also acutely captures the role of the photographer.

The Historic Female will be on display until January 29 at Galerie 3, 4710 St.-Ambroise #101. Phone 939-1704 for details.



Fata Scribunda, lamination photograph and shrine by Cheryl Sourkes

McGILL DAILY CULTURE

comment

"It's time to put on make-up,
it's time to get things right..."

Yesterday, after uttering an oath of only 35 words, Bill Clinton became the president of the United States. With this official inauguration, Clinton presumably ushered in 'a new definition of the American Dream'. Perhaps a last attempt to get away from the ravages of the 1980s, Clinton embodies an anticipated restoration of the American psyche.

What has actually occurred in Washington in the past few days, however, has been a blatant attempt to appeal to a vulnerable American consciousness. Popular cultural icons - say, Kermit the Frog - have been invoked to counter the high-brow, regimented tastes of the Republican audience.

These 'user-friendly' images (insert: Michael Jackson, Fleetwood Mac and Barbara Streisand) have become the sound bites of the baby-boom generation.

Fleetwood Mac's "Don't stop thinking about tomorrow" became the Clinton-Gore theme song, and its popularity inspired an insipid and tired reunion by the members of the band at Tuesday night's inaugural ceremonies.

Fleetwood Mac, once regarded as the epitome of the cocaine-induced excesses of the rock'n'rolling 1970s, have, in a new context, become the appropriated symbols of a president desperately trying to display his youthful vigour and verve.

Clinton has chosen to use a rock'n'roll song as his anthem - although we must remember that Ronald Reagan tried unsuccessfully to do the same thing in 1984 with Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." - but there is a somewhat dubious, if not ominous, feeling to the message. An overwhelming irony emerges when one contrasts the haggard faces of Stevie Nicks and Chrissie McVie with the youthful exuberance of the song in the Clinton-Gore campaign.

Perhaps the most bizarre aspect of the recent inaugural festivities was, however, Bill and Hillary Clinton's sing-along with Kermit the Frog. In an even more desperate attempt to prove their youth, the Clintons took to singing with a muppet, imbuing the styrofoam creature with "real" significance.

It seems incredibly odd and distressing that the man who has supposedly become "the most powerful man in the world" would resort to singing with a styrofoam frog. Is one to assume that when the Clintons leaves the festivities that Kermit too will climb into his limousine and be safely escorted back to his swamp?

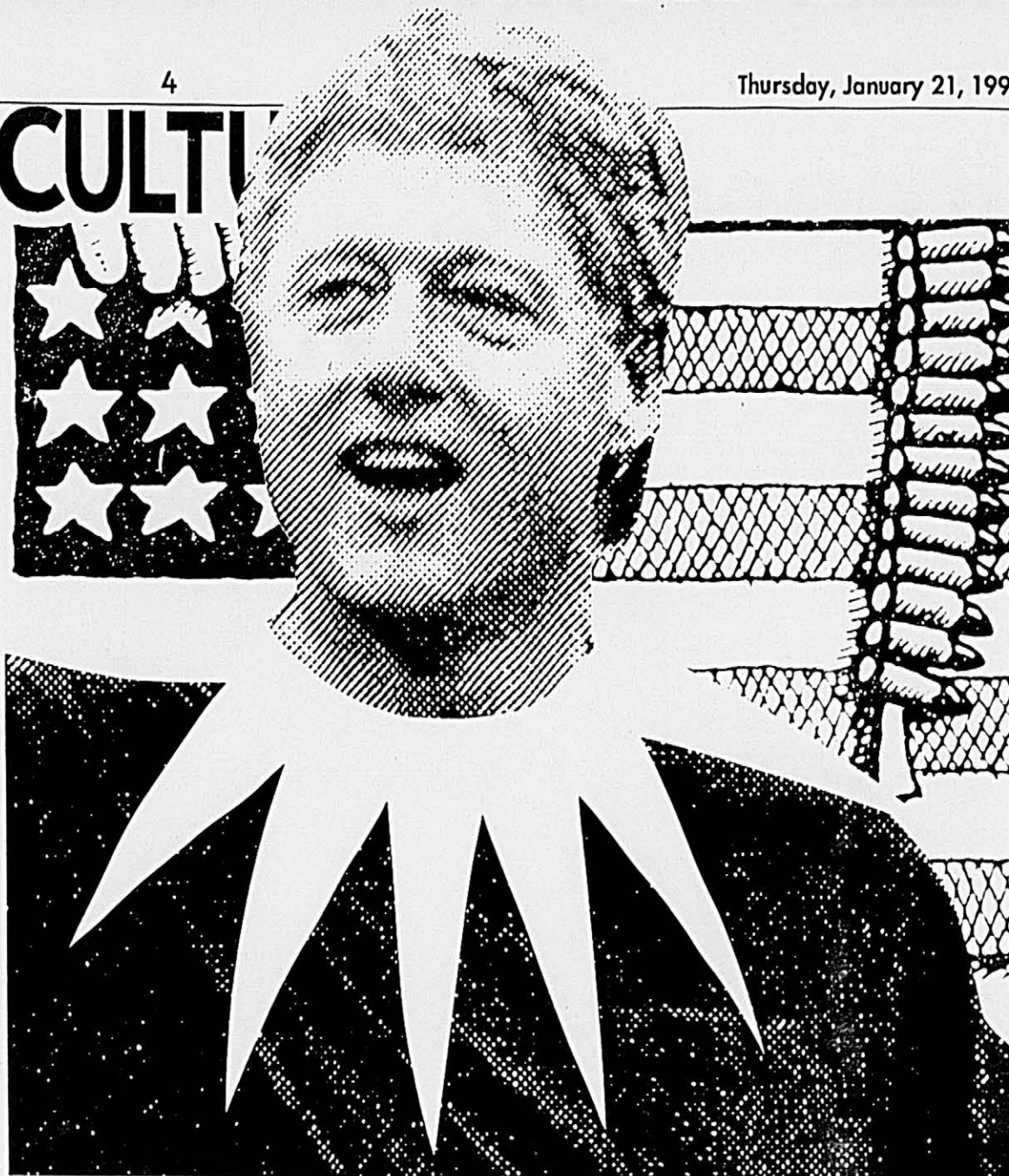
Although the American Dream is, clearly, typified by popular tastes, celebrating the aspirations of a people by singing with Kermit the Frog will never effectively answer the need for popular accountability.

It may fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but never all of the people all of the time.

Inderbir S. Riar
Chloë J. H. Town

erratum

Some mistakes crept into "New women's journal at McGill" (Monday, 18 January). The '83-5 women's journal was *Hejira*, not *Hejina*, "Daiah Heller" is in fact Daliah and the Kate in question was a Hilton, not a Thorton. Oh, aren't we silly.



hyde park

Israel Week ignores Palestinian deportees

Opinion submitted by Omar Sartawi and Mohammed Kadry.

While the McGill Israel Public Affairs Committee (MIPAC) is celebrating Israel week with flamboyant live music videos of designer bathing suits by native Israelis, colourful tents and a lot of falafel and other traditional Arabic foods, which they assured me are genuine Israeli dishes, something felt very odd, very odd indeed.

MIPAC was trying to show how great a country Israel is - and indeed Israel has over the last 45 years, striven greatly. It has one of the highest GNP per capita in the region, excluding oil-rich states. Its Jewish population increased from 100 000 in the 1920s to a strong 4.5 million today. If I were a Zionist I would definitely be proud of Israel. It remains the most industrialised and technologically advanced country in the region all in the space of 45 years!!

A closer look, however, at who had to pay for all these grand accomplishments, brings forward the real and genuine face of the Zionist

state. Allow me to consider only one example of how the Palestinians have paid and continue to pay the brunt of the costs of Israel's great accomplishment.

On December 17, 1992, the 'post Cold War' world witnessed Israel's expulsion of 417 Palestinians from occupied Palestine. Israel accused these people of being either members or sympathisers of the Hamas resistance organisation. Now they live in U.N. sponsored No-Man's Land. Meanwhile, Israel continues its ethnic cleansing of Palestinian natives under occupation.

Soon after the expulsions, the U.N. Security Council passed resolution 799, which "strongly condemned" the "occupying power". It reaffirmed seven previous Security Council resolutions that dealt with Israel's past illegal expulsions of Palestinians and demanded that Israel ensure "the safety and immediate return" to the Occupied Territories of all expelled people. This resolution was

immediately rejected by Israel.

The international community has condemned Israel for the expulsions. It is hypocritical that the international community doesn't recognize that the expulsion was not the first Israeli violation of human rights, nor will it be the last, if Israel is not stopped.

77% of the Palestinian population lives in exile or in refugee camps. The rest live under occupation. If they are allowed to return, the 417 Palestinians, 60% of whom held university degrees of some kind, will likely be detained by Israeli authorities. Human rights reports show that between December 1987 and November 1992, more than 131 000 Palestinians were injured or killed by the Israeli occupying forces. That is almost 10% of the Palestinian population under occupation.

The idea of a Jews-only state is similar to the idea of a whites-only state, especially when that state's 'non-Jewish' population, resident and in exile, outnumbers its Jewish population.

Keep up the good work, Israel, we are all very proud of you!!

All readers are welcome to submit letters under 300 words. Add your name, program, year and telephone number. Anonymity can be provided; talk to an editor beforehand. Opinions can be expressed in the form of a Hyde Park, no more than 500 words.



SINCE 1911

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Saturne vaincu par l'Amour, Vénus et l'Espérance by Simon Vouet, painted perhaps between 1643 — 1645

BEFORE GOING TO SEE CENTURY OF SPLENDOR, IT HELPS TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. WHAT FOLLOWS IS A BRIEF BUT FAIRLY COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE ERA.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WAS a period that readily evokes empty superlatives. Through the aggressive economic and militaristic policies of the ostentatious Louis XIV, France became the most powerful nation in Europe, while Paris replaced Rome as the cultural center of the world.

The influence of the Italian Baroque is unmistakable in its French counterpart and first came into effect with the presence of Marie de' Medici, the Italian wife of King Henry IV of France, whose taste helped to determine the commissions of the court. In this early stage of the century, French artists were encouraged to copy in part the Late Mannerist style

that emerged out of the Italian Renaissance, a lyrical and poetic mode of painting that allowed for the artistic freedom to distort the natural.

Young painters of this period would make the necessary pilgrimage to Rome to study contemporary Italian masters. During these visits, many painters were irreversibly influenced by the revolutionary naturalism and dramatic tension of Caravaggio. Among these artists was Simon Vouet who chose this more naturalistic style over Mannerism.

In concordance with the rise of rationalism in this period, many artists chose a style that reflected

immediacy. The strong naturalism and near social realism of the Le Nain brothers and Georges de la Tour, shows a relationship to these rationalist ideals.

The styles of these artists collided with the analytical style of Poussin, who, although a Frenchman by birth, spent his entire career in Italy. Poussin's austere classicism became the favored style of the sophisticated French intelligencia.

Claude Lorrain, another French painter working in Rome, also produced paintings that reflected the classicist tendencies of the era. The influence of the Roman style was so fundamental to Claude's work that when the artist was asked to return to Paris to produce Grand decorations for the Louvre in the style of Louis XIV, the painter could hardly bear working there. After only a short period, Claude abandoned the commission and returned to Rome, thoroughly disgusted with the ostentatious tastes of the King.

With the monarchy of Louis XIV came a redefining of the

visual arts led by the *premiere peintre* to the court, Charles Le Brun. The King placed Le Brun in virtually every position of influence available in the production of art in France at the time. Le Brun was not only head of the *Academie* but was also in charge of the Gobelins, a converted tapestry factory that provided for all the decorative needs of the court, from paintings to furniture and carpets. Louis commissioned Grand decorations for Versailles as well as other official buildings.

The gaudiness of the King's taste once again reorganized the popular stage and introduced a debate known as the Poussinists vs. the Rubenists, or drawing vs. colour. At the end of the seventeenth century, painterly artists such as Nicolas de Largillierre enjoyed a gain in popularity. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the colouristic trend evidently proved victorious as the Rococo is favored by Louis XV and his mistress Mme de Pompadour.

important works but is slightly marred by the inclusion of several works by second rate artists under the pretense of presenting a more complete view of the century.

Certainly it is extremely difficult to obtain masterpieces of the era and the efforts of all those involved must be commended. The fact that any works at all by Claude Lorrain or Poussin were included is to the credit of both French and Canadian curators. The Museum has also organized a concert featuring the great composers of the seventeenth century to coincide with the exhibition, to be held on January 30 at the Maxwell Cummings Auditorium. This exhibition has provided for Montrealers an excellent chance to achieve a substantial understanding of the *Grand Siècle* and should not be missed.

Century of Splendour runs at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts until March 28, 1993.

ART

Century of Splendour • Montréal Museum of Fine Art

BY CARLTON EVANS

Stevie Started a Rock Band

If Stevie Ray Vaughan was a Rock musician he probably would have formed the ArcAngels. In a way, that is precisely what the legendary plank slapper has done.

Chris Layton and Tommy Shannon were the rhythm section of Double Trouble, the ill fated blues legend's backing band. Together they are both the heartbeat and marketing gimmick of the Austin, Texas Rock'n'Blues outfit.

ArcAngels got its name from the initials of the Austin Rehearsal Complex where Layton and Shannon met to jam before Stevie's death. Also at the complex were Doyle Bramhall II and Charlie Sexton, two guitarist/singer/songwriters working on individual careers.

During Stevie's hiatus from Double Trouble, to work on Family Style with his older brother Jimmy, the four musicians formed the ArcAngels.

It was never intended as a recording band. But that was before an August 1990 helicopter crash that sent the blues legend to a premature death.

For Double Trouble's rhythm section, the ArcAngels became a much needed diversion from mourning the loss of their colleague and source of income.

"It was real important to keep going and not get bogged down in our own misery," says bassist Tommy Shannon, "We still have it, and it hurts real bad, but you gotta go on living."

Bramhall's father sang, wrote

MUSIC

• Arc Angels •

BY MUHANNED AL-NUAIMY



The ArcAngels will be bringing their Stevie Ray Vaughan inspired Rock'n'Blues to the Spectrum this Friday night.

and played drums with Jimmie Vaughan's band The Chessmen in the 60s, and later in the 70s with Stevie in The Nightcrawlers. Growing up on the road with his father, it was no surprise that Doyle Jr. also took an interest in the Blues.

Bramhall started playing clubs at 15 and was one of few guitarists Stevie allowed to sit in with him.

Charlie Sexton is the Rock influence in this group. A child prodigy, Sexton began performing on stage at 11 and was soon recording with Don Henley, Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones' Keith Richards and Ron Wood.

The two 24 year old singer/songwriters shelved their own musical careers for a band that

seemed to have a momentum of its own. Little Steven Van Zandt was brought in to produce the resulting sound.

Their self titled debut album is just a little bit disappointing.

A strong rock base runs through all the tracks, infused with large doses of blues, and a light sprinkling of funk. While the

combination works in some cases, in others it fails miserably, degenerating into the schlockiest of 70s hard rock.

Part of the trouble is the individual approach that the two younger members have taken to singing and songwriting. Apart from the album's successful single "Living in a Dream", the artists have worked on their own songs. This gives the album a disjointed, slightly schizophrenic sound.

Bramhall II's songs are heavy on the blues, and in this reviewer's opinion they are the only tracks with any merit. An excellent example of his work is "See What Tomorrow Brings", a soulful tribute to Vaughan with a pleasing gospel influence.

This album, however, does show some promise. Not surprisingly, the rhythm section is impressively tight, and if the singers compromised some of their individuality they could probably produce songs of more consistent quality.

What is in question, is whether Arc Angels is a work in progress or a one-off project. Sexton and Bramhall may decide that their musical differences are irreconcilable and continue their own established careers.

"If Arc Angels is to be together for 15 more albums, then so be it," Layton comments. "And if we were to make one more record and everybody wanted to go do something different, then so be that too."

words & pictures

MAGIC MUSHROOM BY GRACE

I HEAR THE AMERICANS ARE ATTACKING IRAQ AGAIN



IN OTHER NEWS

I saw the sun rise today... I didn't see the mushroom cloud far away... Thank God for that huh?

Here I am What can I do? How can I stop this? Smile and it will all melt away... like ice cream. A sticky spot we will wipe away. Somehow I don't think a saxophone is any quieter....

POWER TRIP



BY JANE TREMBLAY

CRAMPUS



BY GREG MILLARD

Smash Your Head Against the Punk Rock

FILM

1991: The Year Punk Broke • Directed by Dave Markey

BY AMANDA ARONCHICK



Watch Sonic Youth hang-out - what fun!

DIRECTOR Dave Markey documents Sonic Youth's European festival tour with chaotic footage surpassed in its frenzy only by the music itself. *1991: The Year Punk Broke* is the aptly named film.

The documentary concentrates above all on the music, and then on Thurston Moore, Sonic Youth's charismatic frontman, and his backstage antics. Supporting roles are provided by the other members of Sonic Youth and their then little-known opening band, Nirvana.

Other music contributors include J. Mascis' Dinosaur Jr., Gumball, and the much-hyped Babes in Toyland. There's also a brief appearance by the old men of punk rock themselves, the Ramones. "Hey, where's Dee Dee?" Moore cries after them.

The film is shot on grainy, low budget Super-8 film, and Markey is director, editor and photogra-

pher. Markey is known only in small underground circles for his previous films, *Desperate Teenage Lovedolls* and *Lovedoll Superstars*. This film will bring Markey, like the music itself, to the mainstream.

Although Markey states that the film isn't MTV ready, it is definitely geared at the same audience. The cuts are quick and the shots are shaky and disheveled, like the bands.

Sonic Youth approached Markey after seeing his films, "Originally they wanted me to do a documentary for Goo [Sonic Youth's 1990 LP]," Markey said in an interview with L.A.'s *Fiz* magazine.

"We were going to make a movie about it, but that just didn't pan out." It did result in Markey directing two of the band's videos, *Mildred Pierce* and *Cinderella's Big Score* off that album.

"It's a whole different trip. These are all bands that came from small clubs just a few years ago, and so many things have happened. Ever since Sonic Youth was on the Neil [Young] tour... that was the beginning of a whole new era."

Although New York's Sonic Youth have been around for over twelve years, their following has been a small yet faithful one until recently. The shift of so-called "alternative" music to the mainstream is, however, more credible to Nirvana, whose music is undeniably more accessible. This may be less discernible in the film, as the sound quality is weak and every song has some feedback and distortion, not always intentionally.

Intercut between the live footage there are some mildly humorous, self-mocking moments in the film. This insures that neither the film, nor the audience, take anything too seriously. *Spinal Tap* references run amuck, right down to a clip of Nirvana's drummer, David Grohl, fondling the backstage food. One cannot help but be reminded of meat that won't fold and bread that's too small.

Moore, although inconsistent, has a quick wit that he uses to entertain us and confuse foreign journalists. Unfortunately, the film is a little like watching a home movie: funny if you or your friends

are in it, but otherwise grows tedious to watch.

The film is a gratuitous exercise in self-promotion on the part of Sonic Youth. There is little doubt that this is a conscious decision. Sonic Youth have received so much critical acclaim over the last few years. They're today's media darlings and supposedly leading a youthful musical revolution. Thurston Moore refers to the members of his band, himself included, as being "spoiled brats in their thirties". Thirty-year-olds do not constitute today's youth.

Moore, in a mock interview in the film asks a fan "When youth culture becomes monopolized by big business, what are youth to do?" He proceeds to answer his own question, "The first step is to destroy the record company!" However, in a very un-punk rock and contradictory fashion, Moore is now an A&R representative for his label, Geffen/DGC. The joke is on us though, there is nothing punk about watching a film about people smashing their instruments.

Maybe punk has broke into the mainstream, but it's punk 1990s style. It consists of all that

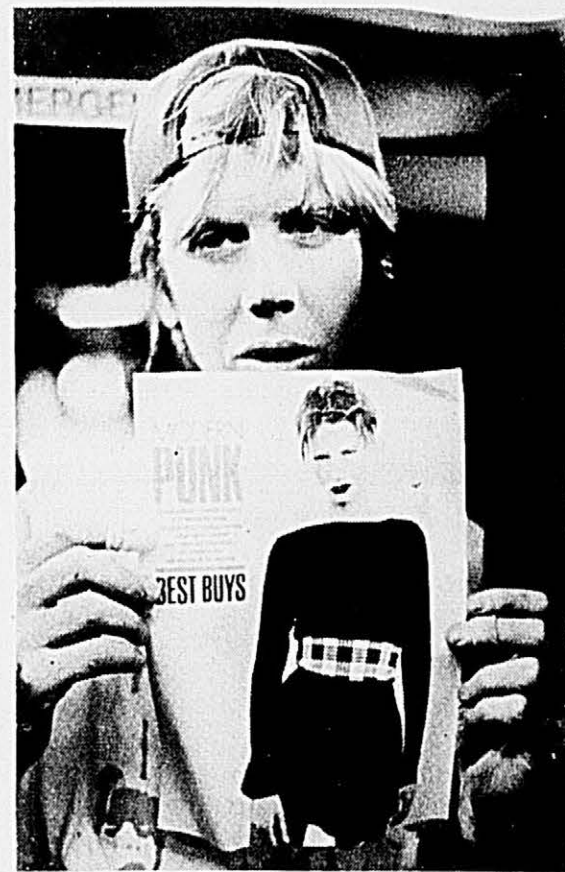
Stuff & things from CKUT

CKUT's chart is based on airplay received.

ARTIST	ALBUM	LABEL
Sloan (cc)	Smeared	DGC/MCA
Allison Knowles	Frijoles Canyon	What Next?/Non Sequitur
Mecca Normal (cc)	Dovetail	K/Cargo
Royal Trux	—	Drag City/Touch & Go
Lunachicks	Binge and Purge	Safehouse
Daisy Chainsaw	Eleventeen	A&M
various	Cause: Rock for Choice	Piece of Mind
various	Volume Four	Volume/Triage
QRN (cc)	Flop (cass.)	self
Eartha Kitt	"Miss Kitt" To You	BMG
Cub (cc)	Pep (7")	Mint
Isaac Oviedo	Routes of Rythm Volume 3	Rounder/Denon
Busted Flush (cc)	Freak	Cuacha!
the Vibrators	The Power of Money	Continuum
Skinny Puppy (cc)	Back and Forth-Series Two	Nettwerk/Capitol
5 Blind Boys of Alabama	Deep River	Elektra
David Murray	Special Quartet	DIW/Sony
Penelope Houston	Glad I'm A Girl (7")	Iloki
Bite (cc)	demo	self
House of Pain	Fine Malt Lyrics	Tommy Boy/Atic
Paw	Sleeping Bag (7")	Nasty Pope
various	Technomancer	Subway/Antler/Caroline
Corrosion of Conformity	Technocracy	Death/Relativity
Inbreds (cc)	The Let's Get Together ep (cass.)	Proboscis/Funkstone
Consolidated	Play More Music	Nettwerk/Capitol
Jesus Lizard	Liar	Touch & Go
FSK	Son of Kraut	Sub Up
Laibach	Kapital	Mute/WEA
Digital Poodle (cc)	Electronic Espionage	DOV
Billy Childish	The Original Chatham Jack	Sub Pop/Cargo
Pé de Serra Forró Band	—	Welt Musik/Fusion III
Heavenly	Le Jardin de Heavenly	K/Cargo
Art Ensemble of Soweto	America-South Africa	DIW/Sony
various (cc)	Bittersweet Canada	Word of Mouth
Swell	Get High (7")	Spirit/Interscope

(cc) = Canadian

Hey... Listen here! Tune in to CKUT-FM 90.3 and Sale Adolescence/Gas Salad Thursday Jan 21 12 - 2pm, for an interview with David Markey, director of "1991: The Year Punk Broke", a Thurston Moore-guided romp through Sonic Youth's 1991 European Tour, full of live footage and off-stage appearances by Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr., The Ramones, Gumball & Babes in Toyland. You can check the film out yourself at the Rialto Cinema, but you've got to be quick! "1991: The Year Punk Broke" will be screening two nights only, once on Friday Jan. 22nd at 9:30 and again on Saturday at 11:30. Don't miss the bus!



Thurston Moore sports his bunny

was negative and superficial about the movement - the fashion, the attitude, the drugs. The focus on self-reliance while maintaining a strong sense of community and supporting the local scene have been lost. Punk has become a fashion statement for bored trendies. *1991: The Year Punk Broke* is not about musical revolution or "a whole new era", it's about Sonic Youth and unless you really like the band, don't see the film.

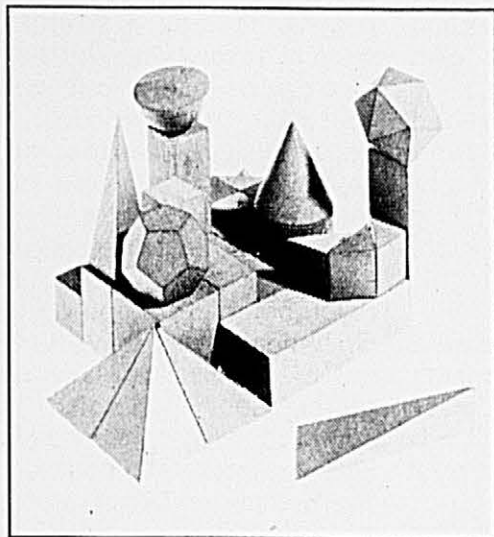
1991: The Year Punk Broke plays at the Rialto this Friday and Saturday night.

Forget Ken and Barbie: Go the Fröbel Way

An exhibition at the CCA continues tracing the evolution of toys

BY VANESSA REID

Play is a very serious topic in certain spheres. *Toys That Teach* at the Canadian Center for Architecture, is pleasant examination of one step in their evolution.



There is much to be learned in this third of a series of toy exhibits, particularly if you are interested in architecture and education. The CCA experience, however, entails much more than just the exhibit. It's a place that invites exploration.

Toys That Teach itself does not take up much space, comprising only 17 toys. At its base are the geometric toys of Friedrich Fröbel, a German educator and creator of the kindergarten.

Fröbel's curriculum was interdisciplinary, combining among other things, mathematics and gymnastics with creativity, physical dexterity and social interaction. He would introduce to the children "Gifts" of increasing complexity, from simple geometric shapes (sphere, cylinder) to paper weaving.

These were used as materials for instruction and were incorporated into motion exercises, song and building, the intent being to develop both mind and body.

Fröbel's kindergarten system was adopted in North America and the first ones were established in Wisconsin (1850) and Boston (1860) where there were large German communities. In the States, the toys soon became part of a large commercial industry and competition between Milton Bradley and J.L. Hammett.

The toys in the exhibition trace not only the evolution of toy manufacturing in Europe and its influence in America, but they are an insight into architectural history.

Frank Lloyd Wright claims to have played with Fröbel's toys as a child, stating they introduced him to the fundamental elements of form and mass.

Fröbel's toys and philosophy on teaching profoundly influenced North American school

systems. The beauty of the geometric forms is that they are not limited to a specific architectural style or construction system. They are versatile and relevant beyond being simple building blocks.

One might question, then, the evolution of these toys and the ways in which their offspring are marketed today. Although Fröbel's toys are not specifically gender-biased as being a boy's sphere and a girl's cylinder, contemporary toys are marketed along such characteristics.

The Toys'r Us Christmas catalogue devoted almost twice the number of pages to boy toys as to girl toys. Even unisex toys were gendered: female Lego sells in yellow and male Lego in guerrilla camouflage. And while the girls' pages were filled with overwhelmingly "passive" toys (dressing dolls) in pastel colours, the boys' pages emanated activity (bow & arrows) in primary colours.

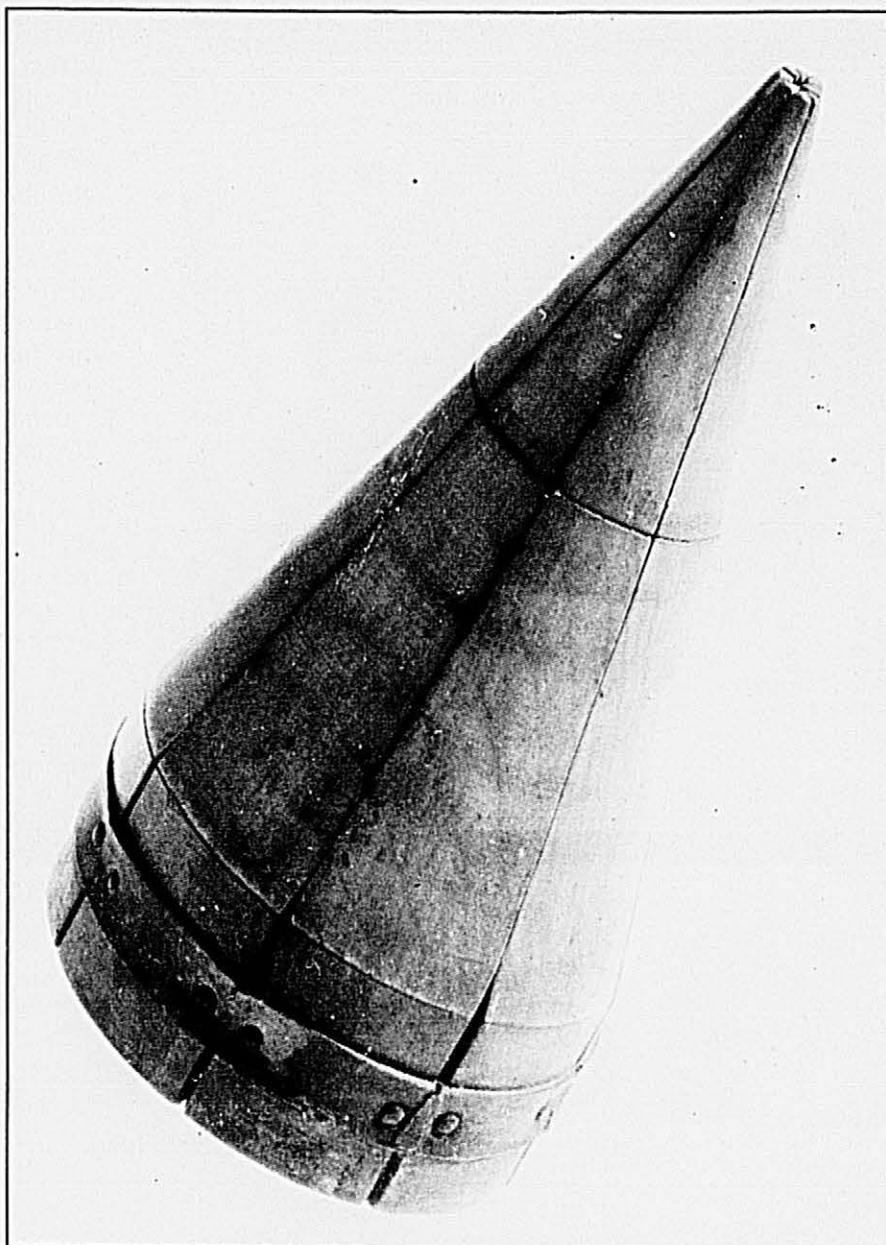
When did Lego and neutral geometric toys become gendered?

And were young girls even

intended to partake in Fröbel's progressive kindergarten programme? The exhibit toys, however, are not colour coded, nor are they packaged to target a specific audience. Unfortunately, there is money in differentiating between boy and girl building blocks.

The CCA exhibit, however, invites parents and children to "play sessions in which they may explore and learn by way of old and new geometric toys with the help of an instructional guide and an actor. Perhaps such an environment may return to the progressive standards established by Fröbel and sponsor a reexamination of gender-specific toy stereotypes.

Toys that Teach runs until March 28. CCA is located at 1920 Baile and is open from 11-6 Wednesday & Friday, 11-8 Thursday, 11-5 Sat. & Sun. Students 3.00\$, free on Thursday with ID.



Yechhhh! It's Reg Hart

BY DOUG McDONALD

Walking up St. Laurent St. I realize a piece of paper has stuck to the sole of my shoe. I pull it off and read it: it's an ad for the latest Reg Hart show at the Rialto. Hart collects rare films, and made a name for himself in Toronto in the 1980's by holding film nights in various locations: church basements, U of T common rooms, etc. Now, through perseverance, and the general gullibility of the average 18 to 25 year old, Reg has cultivated a widespread audience.

From those who survived the show there has been one unanimous sound bite: "it sucked". A McGill student who attended said, "I thought it was a lot of hype about nothing. Hart was a sleazy guy making money by falsely advertising his cartoons".

Last Saturday night the Rialto was turning people away from Reg's *Sex and Violence Cartoon Festival* because the show had sold out. Once the show began, however, the crowd seemed disappointed by the overall dullness of the program. Reg, who spoke between segments, was greeted with catcalls and paper airplanes thrown at the stage.

So now from the sole of my shoe to you, gentle *Daily* reader, I present a discussion I had with Reg Hart in the back room of the

Rialto. Let me say that when the guy you have to interview smells like a bottle of Si Si Si, it makes you wish you stayed home and watched the hockey game.

Reg: Now first of all, this is all off the record.

D: Yeah sure.....So what got you into the film biz Reg?

R: When I was a kid in grade six and in New Brunswick, I went to see *King Arthur's Court*. ... I had read all the books (the saga) and I found out that they had wrecked it. They tried to tell a story that had taken fifty years to unfold in two hours.

I started showing films publicly when I was asked to by a man named Captain George Henderson, in the back of his "Memory Lane" bookstore, when he found out I had some films he wanted to see. I use to show them to friends but they got bored. I showed them to strangers and they liked them. So I kept doing it; never made any money though.

D: Reg why are you so keen to bombard the audience with your personality at the screenings? What is that you want to say?

R: Uhhh... nothing. I'm not trying to sell anything if that is what you mean. I'm not trying to sell you an insurance policy. I'm not trying to sell you the next Prime Minister of this country.

I'm not trying to tell you that in

some way, shape or form that you should commit five years of your life because you think you will get value of it. I'm not trying to do that at all. In fact I'm trying to tell people that I think that they would be far better if they said fuck this shit and went off on their own.

D: Er...fuck what shit?

R: The idea that you can spend five years of your life and x-thousand of dollars and come out of it with something worthwhile. What are you getting at?

D: I'm trying to establish who Reg Hart is.

R: Well you can't because Reg Hart isn't a real person.

D: Oh o.k.! So how many packages do you have in total anyhow? Let's see you got the Sex and Violence one, The Surrealist Anarchist one....

R: I got more packages then you can count on your fingers and toes.

D: Ohso you want to talk about them?

R: No I don't! I've had a hell of a day. I've got a headache.

D: What about showing the *Birth of a Nation* and *Triumph of the Will*? Skinheads come to your shows. This kind of show seems to cater to the culture of white supremacy.

R: I think that anyone who thinks that putting a sheet over

their head is gonna solve their problems is an idiot. You know the last time I did this show somebody called me up and said "how dare you show sex and violence cartoons in Montreal, a city where 18 women were killed by a guy with a machine gun."

I'm sorry, but this show is about what censorship does to people. All because during the middle ages, some people got into their head that male genitalia was disgusting and went around chiseling dicks off statues, and painting baby dicks on them. So I grew up not knowing why my dick was so big. Ha Ha Ha. So what do you say about that?

D: Well I may have a bit of a problem with your genealogy of personal expression in the western world.

R: Are you mad at me? I'm picking up bad vibes here. I guess I shouldn't be so antagonistic. So you gonna stay and watch the show?

D: Sure.

Well I didn't stay, though I didn't miss much from what I heard. Reg probably had a few more belts of wine before he went on stage. Why this guy continues to sell out the Rialto I don't know. I guess some people just know how to manipulate bad press.

Observing a new perspective

GALLERY

Observatoire 4

BY MIMI PESUIT

Observatoire 4 is by no means a conservative gallery. Gallery director, Bernard N'Guyen-Thé-Mai, has a mandate to break all existing barriers and stereotypes within the art world. Both the Eurocentric definition of "art" as well as what constitutes a traditional art gallery have been redefined at Observatoire 4.

N'Guyen-Thé-Mai wants his gallery to be a "open forum". His artists are encouraged to share experiences and discuss their perspectives on their work with the public (on the final and following day of an exhibit) for each show the gallery hosts.

These open exchanges integrate Observatoire 4 artists with the public in an unconventional manner. It provides a means of celebrating Montreal's unique and distinct cultural diversity. It also serves to lessen the gap between gallery artists who are well-known and those who are not.

N'Guyen-Thé-Mai acknowledges that although several ethnic groups have their own galleries in Montréal, few emphasize an integration of cultures.

Thus, Observatoire 4 uses art to unite people of all cultures (an absolute necessity considering the recent rise of nationalism and unemployment, or the "ghosts of the 1930's" as N'Guyen-Thé-Mai puts it). And since racism stems from a lack of knowledge and understanding of other cultures, N'Guyen-Thé-Mai hopes to use art to educate.

Observatoire 4 is as diversified in its media as the numerous cultures it represents. In addition to exhibitions, there are video installations, perform-

ances, poetry readings, concerts, and the "round table" discussions held at the gallery.

"Observatoire 4 is about social responsibility, but art is always next to it," N'Guyen-Thé-Mai states. "If people wait for the government, or any organization for that matter, to bring about ethnic integration, it may be too late."

N'Guyen-Thé-Mai has good reason to doubt the efficiency of government agencies as it is. The gallery receives no grants from the Conseil des Arts, the Ministère des Affaires Culturels (MAC), the Ministère des Communautés Culturels (MCC) et de l'Immigration (MCCI), or the Secrétariat d'Etat et au Multiculturalisme.

In fact, the only funds the gallery receives come from the sale of works on display and from N'Guyen-Thé-Mai's own pocket. The artists share the expenses and receive no fees themselves. Funding, or the lack thereof, is a serious problem for the gallery. Soon Observatoire 4 will offer memberships for those who wish to support the gallery's unique approach.

Although placed under many temporal and economic constraints, the director of Observatoire 4 feels it is a worthy challenge. Contemporary galleries need to undergo a change. They must take a new perspective on art. To this, Observatoire 4 answers the call.

Observatoire 4 is located at 372 St. Catherine St. West, suite 426, and is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 11:30am to 6:30pm. For more info call (514) 866-5320 or (514) 525-3633.

Creative means of personal expression

Frogs and demi-gods

EXHIBIT

ART•VAV Gallery • Concordia Fine Arts Building

BY LINDA GEORGE

Mathew Reichertz fears Bryan Adams' influence on modern culture. Mark Zimmerl has a fetish for frogs. Both are artists with works on display at Concordia's V.A.V. Gallery this week.

These two Concordia students are of a new breed of open and intelligent artists in Montréal. They are just as comfortable expressing their views on cheesy Canadian demi-gods as they are sharing their thoughts on the subtleties of their work.

Reichertz and Zimmerl, both 23, met four years ago in their first year classes at Concordia. However, they vary in their artistic beginnings.

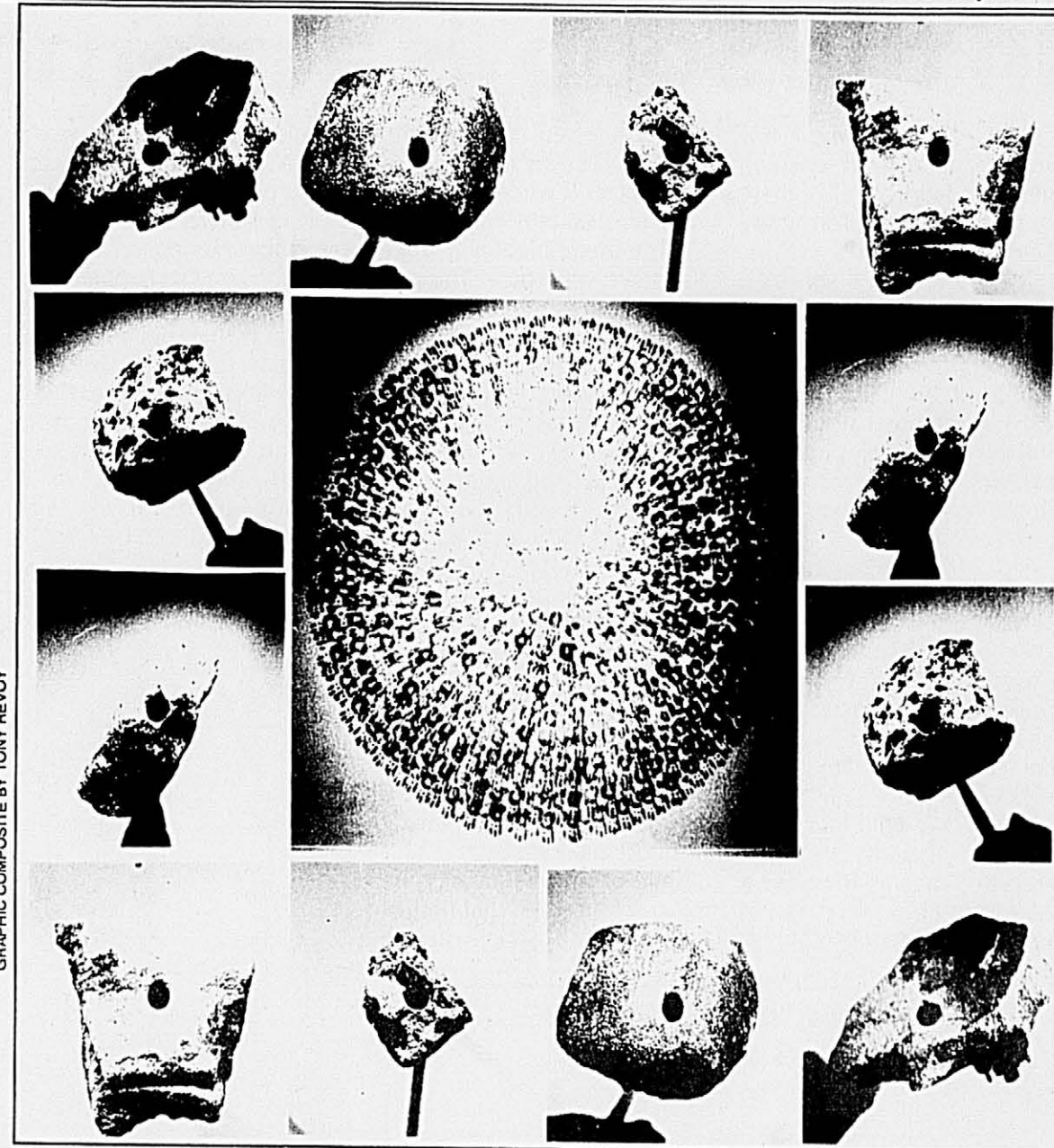
Zimmerl started drawing at a very young age. He credits a teacher's encouragement in becoming an artist. Reichertz, on the other

hand, was a 'late starter', having not become interested in art until he was in CÉGEP.

Their show, currently up at the V.A.V. Gallery, is a clear display of the personal expression of these two artists. Both Reichertz and Zimmerl use strong, aggressive colours to express their contemplations on the self and on their relations with those close to them. The paintings are figurative and accessible.

To some extent, the strongest feelings expressed in this exhibition are those surrounding themes of conflict and hostility. The paintings "don't necessarily resolve conflict, but bring it to mind," explains Reichertz. It is up to the viewer to work through the ideas the art presents them with.

And what do frogs have to do



Several works from James Grant's Show at Observatoire 4

A polluted ideology

EXHIBIT

The Sly Rhetoric of Neutrality • James Grant • Observatoire 4

BY MIMI PESUIT

James Grant's exhibition, "The Sly Rhetoric of Neutrality", currently showing at Observatoire 4, addresses themes of landscape and nature, and their relationship with society. The show's title refers to the seemingly neutral character of nature (the bourgeois ideology of nature as something apolitical and indestructible).

Grant, a young English artist, graduated from the Birmingham Institute of Art and Design 1988. He has lectured in England and Ireland since and his work has been displayed in London, Yorkshire, and at Les Ateliers s'exposent in Montreal.

Grant's fascination with nature is the result of growing up on a farm in Northeastern England, an area wrought with the disturbing effects of industrialization. His work is a critique of man's (sic) demolition of nature, yet it is also a celebration of the beauty of nature.

"People still want to go see

nature....we still have this draw to it...." remarks Grant, adding that he would like to see a true understanding of nature, free of the ideologies propagated by political, social, and economic systems.

"A realistic vision of nature is essential in order to stop ecological destruction", says Grant. When asked whether he felt that this devastation could be curbed in time, Grant responded, "If you can send a man to the moon, you can find a way to curb pollution."

Landscape is often portrayed in art and literature as a wild and violent entity that needs to be tamed. Rather than being revealed as the destroyers of an organized and fragile ecosystem, industrialists are seen as imposing form onto chaos.

James Grant believes that society at large has only recently opposed the systematic devastation of the earth. Environmental atrocities, such

as strip mining and oil spills, attest to this. Nature and industrialization are not "issues that are fashionable."

Grant adds that ecological destruction is not thought to be the result of any politics, as nature is seen as politically neutral. He questions whether nature is truly "neutral". He states, "Nature is seen as neutral and wild. It remains unquestioned and unpolitical. In this way, the political, social, and economic systems have been successful with their ideology."

One of Grant's concerns is that nature is taken for granted. "People think that nature's indestructible, that every time you do something to harm it, it's going to nurse itself better."

Grant further explains that bourgeois dogma sees nature as an unlimited resource. These myths create the illusion that the environment's capacity to regenerate is infinite. "So goes the sly rhetoric of neutrality," explains the artist.

The work of James Grant, "The Sly Rhetoric of Neutrality", will be on display until 10 February at Observatoire 4.

with art? Plenty, says Mark Zimmerl. Yet he doesn't depict frogs as cute, Kermit-like beings. Zimmerl's paintings portray the frog as a darkly aggressive and disturbing presence.

"Frogs have become a totem, relating to my most intense memories of childhood. A feeling of how that natural connection to my environment has been lost to me."

Mathew Reichertz has some very strong opinions about certain sub-

jects (for example, he calls actor/singer David Hasselhoff "scary"). When asked about his work, he talks about the struggle between the feminine and masculine sides of everyone's nature. He is careful to note that his art does not necessarily give an answer to this conflict.

"The works are not about presenting a resolution. It's the questioning that the work proposes which hopefully will set off a series of

events in the viewers mind and in my mind. It's a never-ending process."

While this is "art for the people", the painters' motives were strictly personal. Both of them paint to work through their feelings. Reichertz work tries to express his thoughts on the tension between those close to him. Zimmerl had "hostility and was venting it through expressive means."

Check it out.

In the Soup is a memorable gumbo

Dark humour, irony, a low budget and a great opening line: *In the Soup* has all of these things, sending it well on its way to movie cultdom.

The movie has a simple plot. Adolpho, played by Steve Buscemi (*Reservoir Dogs*) wants to make a movie. His beautiful neighbour Angelica (Jennifer Beals) is his potential star. But, (and this is where the plot thickens) Adolpho has no money, no job and very little life experience to draw from.

All he has is a script. In an attempt to sell it for his desperately needed rent money, Adolpho attracts the attention of Joe (Seymour Cassel). Here, the film departs from its simple beginnings, and the complex characters of the film slowly unfold.

The black & white look of the movie is visually pleasing. Adolpho (Buscemi) looks like a ghost from silent film days. His huge, shocking red lips (all right,

on film they were dark grey) and very sad, old eyes are enhanced by the black & white film, creating a timeless atmosphere.

The use of black and white also serves a purpose. This medium creates a closer bond between the characters and the viewer. Since the movie provides no colour, the viewer's imagination must kick in, giving one character your Uncle Charlie's hair and another your sister's bad breath. Since you must fill in the blanks of their appearances, the characters soon are no longer just faces on the screen, but part of your personal memory.

This is especially true of Joe. Cassel's character is reminiscent of a 1930's mafioso king, but with very modern attitudes. Cassel fills the part with incredible charisma and childish energy without becoming a cliché. But despite of all Joe's joviality, he maintains an edge - that flash of darkness that exists even in nice

people. Cassel won this year's Sundance Award for best actor for his portrayal of Joe.

And Jennifer Beals? Do you remember *Flashdance*? Did you ever wonder what happened to her after the movie? I think it's safe to say that she has spent a lot of time practicing. Her character, Angelica, successfully avoided falling into those typical, one dimensional traps of female heroines. She is the voice of reason among the characters, but does so without being ma-

F I L M
In the Soup • Alexandre Rockwell • Triton Pictures

BY KENDRA HAWKE

tronly or ditsy (Hooray!). She brings vibrance to the role that could have simply been ornamental.

So, here's the rundown. If you want to catch an excellent, memorable flick, or need something cool to talk about on the cocktail circuit, go see *In the*

Soup. Because, hey, we're not really talking soup here; this movie is a gumbo.

In the Soup is playing at the Rialto beginning January 22. Call 274-3550 for specific dates and times.



Director Alexandre Rockwell on the set of *In the Soup*

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events

Meeting of McGill Student Council. Room 107/108 of the Union Building. Today, 18h.

The International Relations Society presents: The International Forum. The focus will be Democracy in Retrospect and Prospect. Any and all individuals are warmly welcomed. Student Union building, room 435. Today, 15h30 to 17h30.

McGill Archaeology Speakers Series presents Prof. Bruce G. Trigger who will speak "Practical vs Cultural Reason: A Comparative Critique." Leacock Building, Room 738. Today, 16h30-18h.

The James Bay Coalition, meets Mondays at 16h30 in the Union building room 435. Information: 495-1482.

Self help group for women with "eating disorders." Help yourself break free from the obsession. More info: 398-2700, Dot or Tam.

SSMU alcohol awareness week. February 8-12. Volunteers and co-ordinators needed. Meeting in the Union building, room B09-B10. January 28, 16h.

Call for submissions to a new feminist/womanist journal. Original, creative and diverse contributions from all women are welcomed. Deadline February 1. Women's Union, room 423. Call: 398-6823.

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McGill Students (with valid ID): \$3.50 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$2.50 per day. McGill Employees (with staff card) \$4.50 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$3.50 per day. All others: \$5.00 per day, or \$4.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. (Prices do not include applicable GST or PST). For more information, please visit our office in person or call 398-6790 - **WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE.**

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Kemper snowboard for sale. Nearly mint condition. Call Todd at 934-6155.

11 - Lost & Found

Have you seen my face? Reward offered for information leading to return of portrait of woman's head - 6th floor, Education faculty. Call 989-9798. Leave a message.

12 - Personal

French speaking medical student seeks English speaking student for conversation and to improve language skills. (French-English exchange) Stéphane: 449-4777.

Make extra cash! Once again the McConnell Brain Imaging Centre is looking for healthy male or female volunteers 18+ to participate in brain research. 398-8932.

Portuguese Friends! McGill graduate (30) working in international development is looking for language exchange partner(s). French, English is offered for your Portuguese. Até logo. François 321-2752.



Know who we are yet? 6 p.m.-3 a.m. 7 days a week. 398-6246.

13 - Lessons/Courses

BETTER MEMORY! BETTER GRADES! The Memory Doctor returns. 5th consecutive year. Easy to use. One time only! Sunday, January 31st. Don't miss it! Lesley 933-4759.

Score well on the LSAT, GMAT, or GRE! Our preparation courses which use a unique approach have been used successfully by thousands since 1979. Call 1-800-567-7737.

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Exchange your English language for the Spanish or French language. Club Hall and Hall. 465-9128.

Macintosh Tutoring: From basics to high-end applications. System 7, Microsoft Word, FreeHand, PageMaker, Norton Utils, Disk Management, etc. \$20/hr. 457-3639 evenings or leave message.

14 - Notices

Anyone who has spent time in the developing world and would like to be involved in Development Week (show slides, talk, etc.) Please call 933-6111 or 288-8128.

LBGM (Lesbians, Bisexuals and Gays of McGill) is holding a meeting today at 5:30 in Rooms 425/426. We'll be discussing the dance, our issue of the Daily, and starting groups for Bisexuals and LBGM's of colour. Come and lend your voice!

Call for undergraduate history papers from Historical Discourses. Submissions are being accepted at History Dept., 625. This is your chance to be published!! Deadline Feb. 1.

Spring Break Daytona, \$249 with no hidden costs. Sign up at Peel Pub (de Maisonneuve) Monday to Friday 1pm to 4pm or call 861-3335.

Do you create? Paintings, drawings, photographs, sculpture, mixed-media, clothing, jewellery, music, self-pub-

lished short stories, poetry or comic books. Looking for stock for new alternative gallery/store. Call-even if you've never shown or sold before. 279-5413.

Audition: Actors needed, M. 18-60 for spring production of *The Lady's Not for Burning*. Call 938-1656

The Hottest Daytona Package! From \$179. No gimmicks. The best party, the best price! Incl.: Pool, TV, AC, phone, pool parties, etc. Call Rajesh 284-5277.

Auditions. McGill Players' presentation of *Hole*. Original production. Auditioning Jan. 21-23. Sign up outside Players' Office.

Independent Researcher is seeking stories from men who have intervened in any way to help someone who was sexually assaulted or sexually harassed. Call 843-3719.

DAYTONA BEACH SPRINGBREAK! Break away to the hottest action in Daytona! Stay in one of the newest motels on the ocean, rated excellent, beach volleyball, free MTV, pool, refrigerators, special promotion. CALL NOW! 1-800-682-0919.

Spring Break Bash in Florida, but not in chilly Daytona, rather on The Gulf of Mexico in Panama Beach for only \$254. Call Alana 989-7334.

Spring Break in Cancun! Exclusive pool parties, bar admittance, beach events, and more... Think fun in the sun from \$399. Call Elaine 284-5003.

Want to Talk? LBGM (Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gays of McGill) sponsors two discussion groups at the Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer (above Milton) on Fridays. A coming out support group meets at 5:30, and a discussion group meets at 7. A great way to find out about yourself & others.

Confused or Curious? LBGM (Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gays of McGill) has restarted peer counselling. Anyone interested in LBGM and/or finding out about their sexuality can drop by Shatner Room 417, or call 398-6822. Hours are 7 to 10, Monday through Friday. We're here for you!

16 - Musicians

Jazz Vocal Quartet looking for a bass & tenor voice to complete our quartet (Manhattan Transfer, Take 6 type music). call Dominique 282-6526 Elaine 251-7378.

Singers Wanted. Professional and volunteer sopranos, altos, tenors, bass-baritones. Shaare Zion Synagogue Choir. Performances on Saturday morning services and Jewish holidays. 481-5737.

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FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MCGILL OMBUDSPERSON FOR STUDENTS

September 1st 1991 to August 31st, 1992

I am pleased to present the Fifth Annual Report of the McGill University Ombudsperson for Students for the reporting period September 1st, 1991 to August 31st, 1992, in accordance with the Terms of Office as approved by the Senate and the Board of Governors (copy attached).

The past year has proved to be an exciting and challenging one for the Ombuds Office. We moved to new premises at 3534 University in January, 1992, and after the usual complications are now well settled in this new location. The office provides a safe neutral meeting place where students can feel assured of confidentiality. The establishment of this office ensures that students have easy access to the University Ombudsperson. The acquisition of a computer for the office has allowed for more efficient statistics and record keeping. However, the most important addition has been the services of Jackie Fee-Owen. Jackie's warmth, cheerfulness and efficiency have added immeasurably to the smooth operation of the Ombuds office.

During 1991-92, I continued to reach out to as many students as possible in all departments and faculties. I have tried to make my presence known on campus in order to increase the community's awareness of the office of the ombudsperson and the services it provides.

I have once again worked co-operatively with several student organizations. I have maintained an excellent working relationship with the *McGill Students' Society* and some of its affiliates. I had the opportunity to participate in *Macdonald College's* orientation program. I continued to serve on the Advisory Board of *Nightline* and assisted in their training program. My co-operative relationship with the *McGill Legal Information Clinic* has continued over the past year. Their expertise has been invaluable in assisting students with grievances and appeals. It is extremely helpful to me to know that their advice and guidance is only a phone call away. Together we have provided an increasing number of students with the advocacy and assistance they requested.

Discussion of Cases

Once again this year (1991-92) there was an increase in the number of students who requested service from the Ombudsperson. This can be seen in more detail in the statistical summary and tables which follow.

Cases are divided into three main categories:

- (1) Requests for information, referral and consultation.
- (2) Complaints against a member of the University faculty, staff or an entire department, which can be handled by the student himself/herself after consultation with the Ombudsperson.
- (3) Complaints which require the personal intervention of the Ombudsperson.

It is important to note that numbers do not tell the whole story, for one case may be settled in one interview or may require weeks or months of intensive intervention.

The proportion of *graduate students* requesting help from the Ombudsperson seems to be increasing. Cases involving graduate students tend to be complex and often difficult to resolve. At times, the student is unwilling to take the necessary steps to bring the complaint into the open as she/he fears this will negatively affect both her status as a student and future job possibilities. As a result, several serious situations are never resolved and the student looks back at her/his career at McGill with dismay.

Many graduate complaints require consultation with the Dean and/or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies or with the Dean of the appropriate faculty.

The Academic Administrators whom I have approached about problem situations have generally been both co-operative and helpful. Although we have not always agreed on the appropriate solution to the problem, we have usually been able to discuss the issues in a thoughtful and forthright manner.

Complaints regarding *Admissions* to both graduate

and undergraduate programs generally require both information and referral. They are often cleared up quite quickly when the student gains access to a decision making officer, although the result is not necessarily their admission to the University. Reasons for their refusal are often what is needed to help the students clarify their future options.

A wide range of academic and non-academic concerns have been brought to my attention during the 1992-92 year. These can be seen in the statistical summary which follows.

Discussion of Selected Issues

The mandate of the McGill Ombudsperson includes the responsibility to bring to the attention of the University those issues and concerns which require further attention by the University.

I am grateful for the efforts made by Vice-Principal Leggett with regard to the issues raised in last year's annual report. His prompt attention to these serious concerns has hopefully led to some amelioration in the problems discussed.

Ombudsperson for Staff

As can be noted in the statistical portion of the report, I have been approached by a number of members of the University staff for advice. The statistics do not reflect the total number of staff who contacted me as it was only after receiving a number of such calls that I started to include them in my records.

It appears that the appointment of an ombudsperson to handle staff complaints would be a most useful undertaking. I have discussed this with Linda Christensen, Director of Human Resources, who expressed her interest in exploring this further. All other Quebec University Ombuds offices provide services to their University staff members. A very disenfranchised population of staff includes temporary employees. As well, those employed as part time faculty to teach on a sessional basis seem to have little or no recourse when their hours are shortened or their services terminated without notice. Although these university employees clearly do not fall under my mandate, I try to refer them to appropriate services when they contact me. I would strongly urge that University seriously consider the possibility of appointing an ombudsperson for staff.

Exam Schedules

A problem which was brought to my attention by many students related to exam schedules. It appears that, particularly during mid term exams, students find themselves scheduled for three or four exams on the same day. Sometimes, more than one of them are even scheduled for the same time period. The authorities are usually willing to reschedule those that are scheduled for the same time, but they reschedule them for the same day which just adds pressure to an already overloaded schedule. No one I contacted seemed to feel that three or four mid terms on the same day constituted a serious enough problem to warrant intervention. I do not know what the solution is, particularly since students often take courses in more than one faculty. However, I do feel that the problem is serious enough to warrant an investigation and hopefully some changes can be made.

The final exam schedule should also be arranged in such a way as to ensure that no student is required to write more than two finals on any one day.

This year, there were also some complications which arose as a result of final exams being scheduled on the last two days of Passover. These are holidays during which observant Jews can neither travel nor write. It is hoped that this problem can be avoided in the future.

Course Withdrawal with Refund Dates

Over the past few years the dates for refunds for withdrawing from some or all course has been set earlier and earlier. Government regulations have added to this problem. However, there have been some situations which required adjustment which was not forthcoming.

Table 1: Problem Type by Faculty

	Undergrad.	Graduate*	Cont. Ed.	Visiting	Staff	Professor	Other	Data Missing	All Programs
Admissions	9	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	21
Complaint	113	43	13	2	4	0	0	0	175
Info/Referral	29	11	6	1	3	0	0	4	54
All Problem Types	151	65	20	3	7	0	0	4	250

Table 2: Intervention by first contact date

	Admissions	Complaint	Info/Referral
Required Intervention	4	63	5
No Intervention	17	112	49
Intervention Required or Not	21	175	54

Table 3: Problem Type by Faculty

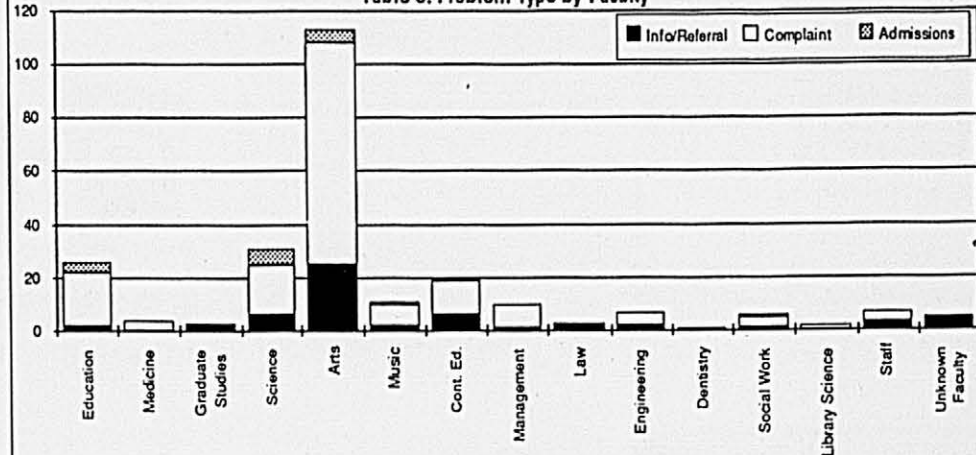


Table 4: Problem Type by Faculty

	Undergrad.	Graduate*	Cont. Ed.	Visiting	Staff	Professor	Other	Data Missing	All Programs
Male	73	30	9	2	2	0	0	2	118
Female	76	35	11	1	5	0	0	2	130
Group	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Missing Data	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Missing Data	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both Genders	151	65	20	3	7	0	0	4	250

Table 4/2: Problem Type by Faculty

	All Programs
Admissions	21
Complaint	175
Info/Referral	54
All Problem Types	250

For example, a married student (with children) whose husband was suddenly transferred to another city, and who was thus forced to withdraw one day after the deadline, was charged full fees, including student fees. Another student who withdrew a week late due to emergency circumstances which left her without the necessary funds to continue her education was refused any special consideration. This past year the final date for withdrawal with refund was Sunday, Sept. 22, 1991, or Sunday, January 26, 1992 for the winter term. It appears that extenuating circumstances should be considered, particularly in relation to total withdrawal from the University.

Student Run Health Insurance Plan

During that past five years, nothing has caused as much turmoil and concern among students (and their parents) calling the Ombuds office as the newly instituted health insurance scheme. The situation was aggravated by instituting the plan in January and sending bills out separately from the regular fee statements. Part time students were particularly annoyed and pointed out that they are ineligible for the services they wish but included in this plan without their consent. I met with the people concerned in administering the plan and hope that some changes are being made which will resolve this problem. I realize that this comes under the jurisdiction of the Students' Society but since the billing came from the cashier's office many parents considered it a "McGill Problem." It most certainly was an "Ombuds" problem in April and May 1992.

Students with a Disability

This year, once again, I dealt with a number of disabled students who were having difficulty coping with the University bureaucracy and what they considered the University's lack of concern for their rights and their special needs. I worked closely with Mrs. Aikens on these concerns, some of which were resolved to the student's satisfaction, some of which were not. I am delighted that the University has decided to hire a full time person to handle these serious issues and hope that Peter Cooperman's energy and expertise will help disabled students gain their rightful place at McGill. The issue of the location of the office on the third floor of the Powell Building remains a troublesome one. It appears somewhat paradoxical that the office of the co-ordinator of services for disabled students is inaccessible to the physically disabled. I would like to suggest that an extensive educational program is needed throughout the campus in order that staff, administrators, faculty and students increase their awareness of the complex needs of these students. Only then will McGill become the "kinder, gentler" place it professes to be.

Harassment

Several students have come to me to discuss issues of harassment, both sexual and other forms. Most of them do not want to take action as they fear the repercussions of doing so. They simply want a sympathetic listener who will give some advice about how best to cope. Those who are prepared to go forward I refer to the Sexual Harassment Officers, if their complaints fit into that category. Several students have come to complain about our sexual harassment policy as they feel it leaves them unprotected and without an advocate. I strongly support the student initiative for a review of our policies and procedures in this area and for ongoing student participation in the establishment and review of the University's sexual harassment policies and procedures. Many Canadian Universities have instituted new policies

over the past two or three years and I feel it is time for us to take another look at all available data, and if it is felt warranted, then to amend our policies to reflect the new knowledge and experiences in this serious problem area. Unwelcome sexual advances create a hostile environment, one which shakes the very underpinnings upon which the University is based.

Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons

Our association is growing as more colleges and universities across Canada appoint Ombudspersons. Together we struggle to develop new and better ways to help our constituents solve their problems. The support and encouragement we give to and get from each other helps to keep us on track. In Quebec, we meet regularly to share ideas and concerns. In these days of tight budgets and cost cutting, tensions run high and Ombuds offices are kept busy. The back up we provide for each other is invaluable. The tragedy which occurred this year at Concordia University reminds us of our vulnerability, and the need for developing support systems within our institutions.

We also maintain ongoing contact with Ombudspersons at our sister universities in the United States. Last April we held a joint Canadian-American Ombuds conference in Columbus, Ohio which proved to be a most informative experience. Our meetings inevitably result in new ideas and new challenges.

CONCLUSION

The past five years have taught me that the Ombudsperson wears many hats. It is sometimes our function to simply listen and offer respect for the feelings of the person who has come to consult us. The student may "just want to be heard" and may decide to take no further action. With other students it may be necessary to conduct a fair, prompt, impartial but thorough investigation and then try to resolve the matter as quickly and calmly as possible. For others a grievance or appeal may be the next step. What is important is that we provide responsible options from which the student can choose. The Ombudsperson has the designated responsibility to help those students who come to us for assistance. Our power may be intangible but we have a valuable role to play in ameliorating conflict. By establishing the office of the Ombudsperson, the University has clearly stated its commitment to remedy inequities wherever possible.

"Ombudsmen act as counsellors, investigators, mediators and shuttle diplomats.... Successful practitioners are very patient (because they can never decide anything), and they never give up on a problem, so they may appear to be somewhat stubborn, albeit polite."

I begin my sixth year as Ombudsperson for Students at McGill with energy and enthusiasm. I feel confident that natural justice will prevail and that the University community, faculty, staff and students will move forward hand in hand to accomplish the goals of the University... to provide a superior education for all in climate of co-operation and mutual respect.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Werk,
Associate Professor,
Ombudsperson for Students.

*M. Rowe, Practice and Perspective, The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1988.

OMBUDSPERSON FOR STUDENTS Terms of Reference

The role of the OMBUDSPERSON FOR STUDENTS is to receive complaints from the students and to try and resolve those complaints through informal negotiations with a view to avoid the more formal grievance procedures already existing at the University.

Appointment

The OMBUDSPERSON is appointed by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of a joint Senate/Board committee, one-quarter of whose members will be students.

Working Conditions

The OMBUDSPERSON is appointed for a term of five years.

The OMBUDSPERSON is a member of the McGill Faculty respected by staff and students. The half time Ombudsperson's appointment is subject to a fixed formula for merit increases equivalent to 50% of the University's average academic merit, unless the academic half appointment is higher. Where the academic half is higher, the Ombudsperson's half appointment merit component will follow.

Office Facilities

The OMBUDSPERSON is provided with a separate Office, appropriate secretarial support and on-going answering phone facilities.

Functions

The OMBUDSPERSON is an impartial arbitrator, as free as possible from conflict of interest situations.

The OMBUDSPERSON investigates, at the request of any member of the student body, any complaint that may arise between that student and the University or anyone in the University exercising authority.

The OMBUDSPERSON brings his or her findings and recommendations to the attention of those in authority by the most expeditious means possible.

The OMBUDSPERSON investigates any apparent inadequacies in existing University procedures which may jeopardize the rights and liberties of any members of the University community.

The OMBUDSPERSON formulates recommendations which are not to be construed as formal policy.

The OMBUDSPERSON, if required by both parties, mediates disputes between grieving parties.

Confidentiality

The OMBUDSPERSON treats all complaints in a confidential manner where appropriate with the utmost care and respect for the individuals concerned.

The OMBUDSPERSON has access in accordance with law to all official files and information as are required to fulfill his or her functions.

Scope

Inquiries made by the OMBUDSPERSON to members of the University receive respectful attention and are treated with reasonable promptness.

The OMBUDSPERSON does not make University policy or replace proper legal channels; he or she acts solely in an advisory and intermediary role.

The OMBUDSPERSON exercises no powers that are beyond the legal scope of the University. He or she can only make recommendations regarding actions or policy within the scope of the University.

Annual Report

The OMBUDSPERSON provides a written report of the activities and decisions of his or her office annually to the Senate.

This annual report indicates the progress of the OMBUDSPERSON's office and indicates any recommendations for improvement.